

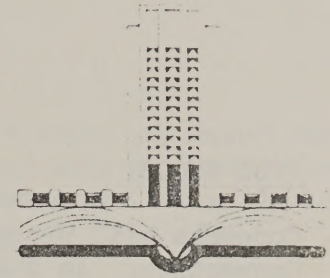
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SCIENCE AND EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION

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TIS NEWS NOTES

No. 3, July 28, 1980

KEEP 'EM COMING

We have a raft of items about TIS people, activities, and programs for this third issue of News Notes, as you can see. Those notes that do not list a name to contact for further information at the end of the item were contributed by the Administrator's Office. What we need is more notes from units and individuals within the organization. Please send contributions to Gene Farkas, Room 111, and he'll do his best to include them. Please keep them as brief and concise as possible.

IT'S ALMOST HERE...FLEXITIME AT LAST

AOD Personnel has informed us they are preparing a flexitime training kit for TIS. Within two weeks they will instruct members of COSTIS on the subject at a special meeting. Supervisors should be thinking about the application of flexitime in their individual units.

RUPERT CUTLER TO LEAVE USDA

Assistant Secretary Rupert Cutler has announced he will be leaving the Department in the near future to work with the Audubon Society. We will be losing a good friend. While our contacts were not frequent, there was the feeling that we had someone in high places who really understood what we were doing. His wonderful sense of humor gave us all a boost.

COMPENSATORY TIME OFF

Several of you are working up a head of steam over the question of compensatory time off for the time you spend at conferences. This got started when it was suggested that TIS managers keep a personal record of overtime work you do in behalf of TIS. Since whistle blowing has become common you may be asked to justify the amount of time you spend away from your desk. The person who whistle blows on you sees only the clear fact that you are not at your desk, and assumes that you are doing nothing for your pay. Divest yourself of the idea that we would send you to a conference, pay your full expenses and salary, and then give you equal time off for the inconvenience. AM 402.2 is the regulation governing overtime and comp time. It is still the law at TIS.

MORALE AT TIS

In our study of morale problems in the organization, we have found that the most negative of your feelings have to do with your opportunities for promotions and the fairness of the process. While the entire study will be discussed at the July 31 meeting of COSTIS, you should read this article attached from the Washington Post. It deals directly, in a somewhat humorous vein, with office politics. It is a little suprising that so few of you are willing to play this game. Too many of you may have adopted the attitude in the fifth paragraph of the article.

1981 BUDGET

Congress will probably not complete work on '81 until after the Democratic Convention. In the meantime, Dr. Farley is meeting with Division Chiefs and preparing the '81 TIS Operating Plan. Our funding for next year includes modest increases for inflation, aquaculture information, and farm delivery systems. Most of the inflation increase will be used to supplement book and journal costs, document delivery and computer costs. There are no new positions in '81. Congress is counting on saving money through the personnel freeze and has already nipped our salary budget to the tune of \$143,000. This has no impact on existing positions, but will mean careful nursing of TIS salary expenditures next year.

...AND ON TO 1982

Our work on the '82 submission is completed. Hearings before the Secretary and OMB will be held within the next few weeks. At this point the budget is confidential and shared only on a "need to know" basis. In the meantime each of you should refrain from discussing aspects of the budget preparation in which you had a part. The best thing to do is to keep quiet, keep our fingers crossed, and wait for the system to work.

...WITH CONGRATULATIONS

Dr. Bertrand congratulated the Decision Unit (DU), teams for a first rate product. There was no comparison with last year. He suggested that we attempt to keep up the momentum throughout the year. TIS will include the DU team in the quarterly budget review sessions.

LIAISON WITH 1890's

To improve SEA interaction with the 1890 universities, Dr. Bertrand has appointed Mr. Kinley Mayes (CR), as SEA - 1890 liaison officer. He will work half-time and will continue to report to Walt Thomas, Administrator, CR. Dr. Bertrand urged that all components of SEA continue to work with the 1890's and to use Mayes as a focal point.

CHANGES AT SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE (SCS)

SCS now has a special committee for research. Paul Howard is the liaison officer to SEA.

CALS SERVICE TO AID

The Agency for International Development (AID) has recently contracted with TIS to extend our Current Awareness Literature Service (CALS) to AID missions overseas and the AID scientific personnel in downtown Washington and Rosslyn. Called AID-UPDATE, the CALS service will enable AID personnel to keep up-to-date in their battle against poverty in the developing countries. The overseas service has begun with some of the African missions, particularly those in the drought-stricken Sahel region. The NAL-AID Liaison Office staff (under contract with OICD) undertakes computer searches on matters critical to the interests of the AID mission

and sends the resulting CALS reports out to them. The AID mission personnel may then request photocopies. After call number look-up, the requests are turned over to the Lending Division, which pulls the documents, photocopies and ships them to the requesters, and sends billing information to the finance office in New Orleans. (H. Dewey and M. Curtin)

EXTENSION BIBLIOGRAPHIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Extension Bibliographic Advisory Committee met July 2 by conference telephone call. The committee agreed that the success of its various pilot programs indicates there should be a national coordinated plan for the inclusion of all Extension Publications in the AGRICOLA data base.

With this end in mind and recognizing the potential for duplication of Extension Publications in the data base in two slightly different coding systems, it was recommended that a 1-year moratorium be placed on the addition of Extension publications to the AGRICOLA data base except for those which are added through one of the bibliographic projects. The committee will be responsible for working with TIS and the State Extension Directors to develop a systematic plan for the inclusion of all Extension publications in the data base. It will meet at the NAL in October. (G. Paulson)

TIS PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE REORGANIZED

Gene Farkas, chairman of the group, and Leila Moran, executive officer, met with Leslie Kulp and John Forbes of LOD, Phil Dopkowski and Gerry Paulson of ISD, and David Hoyt and Elaine McLaughlin of ERD at the first meeting of the reconstituted committee, July 17. After discussion of the committee's purpose, it was decided that LOD should have a third representative because of its size and publications production. A liaison representative from the SEA Info Publications section also will be asked to attend committee sessions. The next meeting will be Thursday, August 14. (G. Farkas)

VISITING CHINESE LIBRARIANS

A delegation of librarians and administrators from the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) visited TIS on July 9. Escorted by Dean Gamble and Enda Liu, the group was given a detailed introduction to our operations by Associate Administrator Waters especially on the role we play as an information service agency for researchers, colleges and universities, and the international community such as FAO through AGRIS. The visitors were particularly interested in how our services and other USDA information reach the farmers and other interested groups. A tour elicited many questions about our cataloging and automated systems. (D. Gamble and E. Liu)

LEGISLATIVE REQUESTS, SERVICES

Selected publications are now being provided on request by the TIS Current Awareness Literature Service (CALS) to the Minority staff of the Senate Agriculture Subcommittee. Bill Bailey, chief of that staff, reported the staff was "surprised and delighted" at the number of Extension publications cited in our profiles since it had no idea of the extent and variety of these publications. The arrangement was set up by David Hoyt, ERD Education and Training Leader, in cooperation with the CALS unit of ISD. We hope to provide similar profiles to the Senate Majority side of the Agriculture Committee and their counterparts in the House. (D. Hoyt)

USDA publications offering nutritional guidelines for the consumer were given to Ken Auer of the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee staff by our Food and Nutrition Information Center (FNIC) at his request. He was gathering this information in preparation for the upcoming hearings on USDA's role in issuing dietary guidelines. A copy of USDA's newly completed Food and Nutrition Inventory (FANI) led the list of publications. (R. Frank)

CAREERS: GS Ratings and the Game of Office Politics

By Carol Krucoff

"Any idiot," claims Alexander Methven, "can get ahead in Washington if they use their head. There are some 300,000 pigs here in the federal government. There's no company in the world like it."

The key to a double-digit GS rating? "Tuning into office politics," the Virginia-based career consultant told a workshop on "The Politics of Job Hunting in the Federal Government."

The session was one of about 140 at last week's 11th Annual National Training Program sponsored by Federally Employed Women. The 12-year-old organization has 238 chapters in the United States and abroad.

Despite advancement "practically for the taking," says Methven—who claims to have coached about 10,000 federal workers—many public servants "foolishly over-rely on supervisors who promise to promote them."

The biggest hang-up—particularly for women, minorities and "craftsmen/scientist-types"—is that they don't want to play the game. They pout, "If they can't see me for who I am, I don't want their old promotion."

This attitude is "nonsense," contends Methven. "Unless you can play power politics," he adds, "I hope you never get

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promoted past GS-13. You'll go to a meeting, chicken out, and not bring back the bacon to your own people.

"Self-nomination is one of the most crucial points for controlling your career. You can't be afraid to say 'I want that job, that detail or that two-week course.'"

But promoting yourself doesn't mean "turning people off by telling them how great you are," he says. "You don't have to be a loud mouth. You can be low-key and promote the fact you're a competent person. Stress how you'll be a much greater help to your boss if you get whatever it is you want."

This ability is particularly important in a red-tape-wrapped bureaucracy. Advises Methven: "If you don't like ambiguity, get out of government."

Another "big mistake," he says, "is to go it alone. You have to build a cabinet of advisers."

A good "cabinet" should include

three groups of people: in-house sponsors, peers and "anyone you know—clergy, alumni, community leaders."

"A Ph.D. won't get you past GS-9. But if you are too young, too old, too black, too white, or have the wrong degree from the wrong school, the right sponsorship can get you in anyway."

"Good peers come in as you go down the pike and hide your mentors good-bye. Trusted peers can monitor you, and tell you if you came across too strong in a meeting... or advise you if you have doubts."

Chance contacts outside the office may prove invaluable. "If you read books on an airplane you're a damn fool," says Methven. "You never know who you're sitting next to."

And don't slip on your integrity, cautions Methven, in the race up Bureaucracy Hill. "You want to be able to look yourself in the mirror, even if it's at one grade lower."

Among his other suggestions:

- Be trustworthy. Information is power. If you're excluded, you're dead.
- Retain your sense of humor. It doesn't hurt to be the kind of person everyone's glad to see on Monday morning.

- Do your homework before an interview. Have a sponsor put in a good word, and build a "talking paper," noting how you are particularly well-suited for meeting each qualification.

- Treat colleagues with respect. You may get some vital information from a person everyone else has written off.

- Try to avoid showing resentment or envy of another's success. "Put a rose on the desk" of a colleague who got the promotion you wanted.

- Write thank-you notes. Even if you didn't get the job, you'll be remembered.

- Try for exposure and visibility.
- Become a crucial subordinate to a middle boss.

- Don't waste time in a job. "Women," he says, "tend to stay too long."

How long is too long? "At Kentucky Fried Chicken or McDonald's, stay 10 minutes. At the White House stay as long as you can."

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